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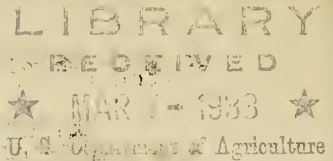
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

The Winter Fruit and Vegetable Market



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wells A. Sherman, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, February 7, 1933.

MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

Two weeks ago you remember we talked about food budgets, and how to plan meals to safeguard health when there's less rather than more money to spend. Since then many of you have written me. Your letters make me feel more than ever that these Household Calendar Tuesdays are just like meetings of the neighborhood club. No matter if we do live a few thousand miles apart. We're all up against the same things these days, and we're all trying to find ways to keep our homes going the best we can.

As I promised you, Mr. Wells A. Sherman is here today, sitting at the microphone across the table. That means, of course, that questions on the fruit and vegetable market are in order. Are you ready, Mr. Sherman?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Miss Van Deman, what's the first question?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, Mr. Sherman, first we'd like your advice on the vegetable and fruit list in our food budget. Suppose you were buying for a family of four -- that is a mother, father, and two children less than 12 years old. For an adequate diet at minimum cost this family needs each week around 30 pounds of vegetables and fruits, fresh, canned, and dried. To start with, they'll need 11 pounds of potatoes, white or sweet. Can you give us any pointers on the potato market?

MR. SHERMAN: I don't know that I can, Miss Van Deman, other than to say that potatoes are plentiful and cheap. They are retailing right now in 100-pound sacks at a little over a cent a pound. If a family has a place to store a hundred pounds of potatoes, of course they can save something by buying by the sack. The saving through buying most fruits and vegetables at wholesale is quite worth while. What is your next item?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Six pounds of yellow, green, and leafy vegetables.

MR. SHERMAN: I suppose you're grouping the green and yellow together because of their vitamin content.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, that's the idea. The green vegetables, especially the leafy kinds, like cabbage and spinach and kale, and the yellow ones, like carrots, and yellow corn, and pumpkin, seem to be especially rich in vitamins. Which of these are cheapest right now?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, for the country as a whole, cabbage, as usual, is the cheapest leafy vegetable. There's plenty of winter cabbage from the North, and there's

(over)



a good supply of new green cabbage from the South, both at very low prices.

As usual Texas and the truck-growing section around Norfolk, Virginia, are shipping good winter spinach. This is about the height of the winter spinach season and it is selling at very moderate prices. There should be plenty for the next 60 days.

Fresh snap beans are also much cheaper right now than they usually are at this season. After the freeze in Florida in December the growers hustled out and planted another crop and now they are sending a lot of fine tender green-podded beans to market. So many were planted all at once that prices are way down but these low prices may not last all winter for each planting makes a very short picking season.

So much for some of the lower-priced green vegetables. Carrots are about the cheapest of the yellow kinds. Those without tops are always cheaper than the bunched. And, so far, as I know, the vitamin experts haven't found the more mature, stored carrots lacking in nutritive value.

Well, what's next on your budget list?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Let me see. I'm going to skip over the dried beans, and the canned tomatoes and dried fruit, and go down to the last item. It calls for 6 pounds of other vegetables or fruit. What bargains would you put in that class?

MR. SHERMAN: Onions. We've probably never had so many and such good, cheap onions as we have this year. Here again if you have a place to store them you can save by buying in quantity. You can get a 50-pound sack of onions for 40 to 60 cents in almost any large town, or around one cent a pound. The growers in Colorado, Idaho, and Utah haven't been able to ship their onions that were less than 3 inches in diameter. They couldn't get the cost of bags, freight, and commission out of the smaller sizes.

Now, as to fruits, the apple crop is a little smaller than last year but prices are no higher. For the last two or three years there's been a growing tendency to market oranges and grapefruit in bulk. It saves the cost of boxes and of wrapping and cuts transportation charges. Lots of fruit moves out of Florida and Texas this way by truck.

MISS VAN DEMAN: And most of us still find it a little exciting to buy oranges and grapefruit by the basket full. Just by way of contrast, I'm reminded of the mysterious orange tree that grew in a closet at our house at Christmas time when I was a youngster. Each orange that came from that "tree", as we called it, was precious. Times do change.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, we've brought citrus fruits down from the luxury class. And I never expected to see fresh strawberries as cheap and plentiful as they are this winter. But don't think, Miss Van Deman, I'm suggesting fresh strawberries for the food budget we've been talking about.

MISS VAN DEMAN: No, Mr. Sherman, I knew you better than that. Is there anything special to say about those other items on the list, canned tomatoes,

dried beans, and dried fruit?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, just that they are all very cheap and there are plenty of them on the market. Michigan produced an unusually large crop of beans this year, and they are retailing at 2 pounds for 5 cents or 3 pounds for 10. Good canned tomatoes, in fact all canned vegetables and fruits, are down to unusually low price levels.

MISS VAN DEKAM: That means that if we can't afford orange juice for the children, we should do our best to get tomato juice for them.

Thank you, Mr. Sherman. Remember you have a standing engagement every so often with the Household Calendar to give us the news of the fruit and vegetable market.

Next week, we're going to hear from Dr. Florence King about choosing kitchen utensils.

Goodbye for this time.

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